

Women at Warp Episode 49: Would Lady Kirk Wear a Miniskirt?

INTRO MUSIC

Jarrah: Hi and welcome to Women at Warp! Join us as our crew of four women Star Trek fans boldly go on our biweekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name's Jarrah, and thanks for tuning in. Today with us we have Grace.

Grace: Hey everybody I made it this time.

Jarrah: Yay! And we have Sue.

Sue: I'm back, too!

Jarrah: Yay! So, before we get started just a couple items of housekeeping. Wanted to remind you about the Women at Warp Patreon, which is an awesome way that you can support our podcast by pledging a small monthly donation to support things like equipment costs, and convention reporting, and producing promotional materials, and basically just spreading the word about the podcast. If you'd like to support us you can do that at <https://www.patreon.com/womenatwarp> . One of the things recently, that we are starting to do with some of the generous funding from our patrons, is that we are able to set up a Women at Warp blog, so that will be coming early in January. This episode is coming out on New Years, and the blog will be hopefully launching this week as you were listening.

Sue: Yeah!

Jarrah: It's awesome. We're really excited about it and looking forward to being able to at least provide some small compensation to writers, so thanks to our patrons and check out our website, <http://www.womenatwarp.com/> if you're interested in blogging for us. And last item of housekeeping is just one to remind you about the Women at Warp book club which is on goodreads, if you search Women at Warp [or, if you're reading this, here's the link: <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/161753-women-at-warp-book-club>] and we have a current discussion in the works which is about the *Legacies* Trilogy which are three books which at least started out featuring Number One from the original Star Trek pilot. So, go on to goodreads and join our book club if you'd like to be involved in that discussion. Anything I'm missing?

Sue: Happy New Year.

Jarrah: Yay!

Grace: *singing* Should old acquaintance be forgot...There's the rest of the song by I don't know the words... *still singing* Should Spock be ejected into space...

Jarrah: Wait, what?

Grace: *still singing* And Kirk begins to cry... But then he lands on the Genesis planet, and all will be just fine... Should Jake Sisko wear ugly vests... I don't know where I'm going with this...

Jarrah: What is happening?

Grace: It's called ad libbing... dahling.

Jarrah: Oh, we're pretending that it's New Year's Eve and we're super tipsy apparently.

Sue: Yeah...

Jarrah: Or hungover on New Year's Day, I'm not sure.

Grace: We're emulating that New Year's spirit for all of you at home, so that we can be a part of your celebration.

Jarrah: Yes, indeed. Well, before we get too far down that rabbit hole of weirdness let us move to our main topic. The term that most people are familiar with is the term "gender swap," when you look at taking characters from a show, or a book, movie and turning male characters into women, and women characters and men. It's a term that's a little bit problematic because it kind of implies there are only two genders, so we're going to use for the purpose of this "gender bent," and we're going to genderbend the original series.

Grace: We're getting strictly wishful thinking here.

Jarrah: Yes so I'm pretty excited about that. Basically this practice of changing genders of characters in pop culture can be subversive because it invites the audience to question why a particular gender was cast for a particular part, and what could have been different had a different choice been made. So, that's what we're aiming for and we're going to discuss what might have worked differently had the same people who created Trek in the 1960s cast women instead of men, but mainly that's most of the roles, or men instead of women for these parts and not all of us are super familiar with the stars of 1960s TV. We might also suggest some alternate actors who could have been cast and been awesome in those genderbent roles.

Sue: I just want to add real quickly that you experience gender bending a lot when you cosplay. There are a lot of people who like to cosplay characters that maybe aren't the gender that they are, and I think that is where we, at least for me, where you sort of encounter it the most often when you see you know a woman dressed as the doctor in Doctor Who, or like I wanted to do it Star Trek Las Vegas but it did not work out, be Dr. McCoy. So, I think that concept, it doesn't come from cosplay but it is prevalent in the cosplay community.

Jarrah: Yeah. And I will also just shout out that gender flipped casting is a suggestion that we had for a topic from patron Allen, so thanks Allen for the support and the idea. So, I was thinking we should start at the top of the hierarchy, yeah, so let's start with Kirk. The way that I made this list was the TOS cast that we know and love. So, I didn't include the characters that we only saw in "The Cage" [TOS, Pilot] or the characters that we only saw in "Where No Man Has Gone Before" [TOS Season 1, Ep. 1], but the recurring characters over the life of the series. So, Kirk how do you think that this character would have been different if they had decided to cast the woman as the captain?

Sue: You think about Kirk's traits, right? There is this adventurousness, but there is also this sort of ladies' man attitude, and how would those characteristics have played if a woman were cast in that role? How likely would we have been to see a... what's the equivalent of ladies' man?

Jarrah: A man eater?

Sue: Yeah, a man eater, I guess as captain of the ship in the 60s.

Jarrah: Yeah I think it would be difficult, but not unheard of. I think that we've talked before about how Kirk generally speaking is you know he is attractive to women but he also generally respects them and tends to not be dishonest with them unless they're villainous. But, you're right, I mean I think that the way that those... the characteristic of you know seducing in a heterosexual relationship, so if it was Lady Kirk seducing men, it could be seen as, especially at that time, as threatening. Certainly when we see these kind of seductress characters, in pop culture even today, oftentimes they're kind of like put as a warning to male viewers to not let your guard down. So, it would have been challenging to pull that aspect of the character off. But, I think that the aspects like you know the sense of command, moral center, the desire to explore, the camaraderie with other crew members, I think that stuff could have worked in a woman at the time.

Sue: Agreed. But, I think where we might find that this is a through line as we go through this casting that there's at least one characteristic that our male characters have, that when applied to a woman is seen as a negative or as a villainous quality, but it's endearing when it's a male character.

Jarrah: Yeah, I mean, I think we basically picked the hardest cast to try to switch genders for these characters. Yeah, especially because we are trying to... you know, we're not treating it as if the creators were living today and designing the J.J.-verse. We're not talking about the J.J.-verse for example, the J.J.-verse has been swapped in comics and I think it actually worked quite well because it has a bit more of our contemporary gender sensibility, so there's a bit less rigidity around those roles and negative stereotyping for people who diverge from what's seen as traditionally masculine or feminine.

Grace: Gender swapped Scotty is having none of your shenanigans. I appreciated that.

Jarrah: Yes. Well yeah gender swapped Scotty, or genderbent, Scotty, Marjorie Scott in those comics, chastises her male counterpart for stereotyping that women should be fastidious and clean because her engineering is just as messy as his. And she basically calls him out for being sexist which is kind of awesome.

Grace: The thing that kept getting to me is just the fastidiousness of clinging to the naming convention, like, "yes, this is an alternate timeline where everyone's genders are different than in our dimension, but the parents were still going in the same vein, name wise."

Jarrah: Yeah, I mean, certainly we're not even going to bother trying to rename them.

Grace: Nah, we're not that creative right now.

Jarrah: No, we're just going to say as we're going to be like it's woman Kirk is what we're doing right now. So any things about Kirk that you think would have worked or not worked had they cast a woman? This is presuming that the networks would have let them and things like that.

Grace: I would have been interested to see how... well we were already talking about how sexually active they would have a woman Kirk be, but I'm really curious about how proactive they would have her be. Would she be the same amount as male Kirk? What would the difference be? How much would they feel the need to dial that back with the character being a woman is one thing that I'm wondering about.

Jarrah: Yeah absolutely. I mean the other thing that I was trying to envision, is would it have worked to gender flip the uniforms based on where the uniforms ended up in TOS. So, like would you actually put the captain in a miniskirt and Spock in a miniskirt?

Grace: I don't think you would. I don't feel like they... I feel like if that was the position they'd say, "hey maybe this isn't very authoritative looking."

Sue: I think that there is a big question surrounding that, right because the miniskirt in terms of fashion in the 60s was like a power play. It wasn't, for most people anyway, about objectification. It was about owning your sexuality. Right? So, maybe from that aspect they would have, but I still think we might have seen an alternate uniform that included pants, hopefully, as the captain would beam down to a lot of different situations on planets. Just for practicality reasons.

Grace: Right.

Jarrah: Yeah. I mean in the *Legacies* books which were going to be covering in book club, they imply that women have a choice whether to wear pants or a miniskirt, and I think that had you actually had a woman dominated cast, that would have been the way that they would have gone just for practicality sake, if nothing else.

Sue: Yeah, one thing I wonder about with the Kirk character, is that we see over and over again Roddenberry putting in the storyline of like is Kirk done with space? Is he ready to leave the starship?

Grace: Is Kirk just had enough, is he packing up his bags and going home this week?

Sue: Well, it happens a lot!

Grace: I know, I absolutely agree with you I just think it's funny that that's the thing that is kind of his... Space is his white whale, in a way he's like, "Am I done with... have I gone too far with space?"

Sue: But you even see Kirk doing it in the J.J.-verse, you see him doing it at the beginning of "Beyond" like it's a very Kirk characteristic. But how would that have played if it were a woman? Would the reason have been because I want to settle down and have a family?

Jarrah: Well, we kind of see that with Pike in "The Cage," so...

Sue: Yeah.

Jarrah: That's the way that I would see them going if they went that route, and probably kind of unfortunately, like is her biological clock ticking.

Sue: Which they say in that one episode about Scotty's girlfriend. "Just wait till she finds a man she'll leave Starfleet."

Grace: Another thing that comes to mind about, we're talking 60s TV, we're talking Captain Kirk if Captain Kirk had been a woman, they would have definitely felt the need to probably make her sweeter and nicer, because apparently that's always a priority with a woman character, you have to go out of your way to make sure no matter what they do they're nice and likable, otherwise they're hateable.

Jarrah: Yeah, I could see that possibly happening. I think that also we need to treat these roles kind of individually, because I can't really see them casting Kirk, Spock, and Bones as women and not having it viewed as like the 60s equivalent of a chick flick. Right?

Sue: "Charlie's Angels" in space.

Jarrah: Yeah, basically.

Grace: Skirts among the stars!

Jarrah: Instead of wagon train to the stars.

Sue: I would watch "Charlie's Angels" in space, just saying.

Grace: Well who wouldn't!

Jarrah: Yeah, well that's just another example of how like stories about men, like less so now but certainly at the time, are just seen as like stories for everyone, and stories about women are seen as stories for women.

Grace: Always fun that men are seen as the standard.

Jarrah: So, yeah, but I mean I'd be down to have seen a woman Kirk. Did either of you have any casting ideas for this role?

Grace: You!

Jarrah: I basically started going through a list of 60s actors, first I just kind of racked my brains, I tried to think of ones who had been in Star Trek as guest stars, who had maybe been in the pilot, and then I basically ended up just trying to cram British actors I liked into these roles. But, a British actor I like who I think could actually really pull off Kirk would be Maggie Smith.

Grace: That would have been awesome!!

Jarrah: I mean young Maggie Smith, she was really able to do both, hard edged and sort of softer and more feminine. I mean she obviously still can do that. She has always had incredible range, and I think she's someone who has a commanding presence. So, I would buy her as Captain Kirk.

Grace: That would be pretty great.

Sue: Yeah, I don't have any strong feelings about Kirk. There are a few coming up, though.

Grace: My pick for Lady Kirk even though, she was probably she was mostly involved in movies at the time, but we're played with our imaginations here, I would have gone with Anne Bancroft, because I just, she was such a solid actress all around. She had definite charisma and sex appeal that kind of go with Kirk naturally. But she also just had the ability to put so much pathos in any role she played even friggin Mrs. Robinson gives you a split second of "oh that poor woman." And then you go wait a minute this character, I'm feeling that for this woman? Really part of the big inspiration is if you haven't seen "The Miracle Worker" what is wrong with you, for one thing, just her performance as someone who is so completely and totally torn and getting just run through the mill the entirety of the movie, I feel like, if I can believe that I can believe her being in deep space having that command, and again her presence in and of itself can be very commanding in any given performance. And, I would just love to get to see Anne Bancroft in space!

Jarrah: For sure. Did you have another pick?

Grace: Well one that I would have, and this is going to be kind of a reach, because we actually already see her in Star Trek. I would like to see Julie Newmar do Kirk, just because I think that would be an interesting slip on the script there, and she's one of those actresses who I like everything I've seen her in, but I feel like this is something that would be different from what I've seen her do before, and that would be interesting. Because again like Anne Bancroft, she has got that charisma and that sex appeal to her but I feel like it would be a little more fun with her than it would be with Anne Bancroft, which is definitely something that Shatner was putting into the role. There's a very puckish nature to it, and I think it would have been cool to see Julie Newmar get to do that.

Jarrah: Yeah, I'd watch that. So, shall we move on to Spock?

Grace: It is only logical.

Jarrah: So, I mean, well Spock is actually really interesting for that reason, because we don't really see any women, well we see, so we get T'Pol and T'Poling, we've talked about women in Vulcan society in our episode on "Amok Time" [TOS Season 2, Ep. 5], but you kind of get the sense that Vulcans are a bit of a patriarchy other than T'Pol, but like that their familial relationships are patriarchal at least based on what we see in the original series. But, even more than that, the idea of logic and science has a really long background of being treated as inherently masculine, and to the point that there's a lot of deliberate efforts in casting today to try and help girls and women to feel safe exploring science and math. So, I think that it would have been really groundbreaking at the time to see a woman play a logical character, and I mean some people would even say that that is why Number One didn't succeed at the time was that the audience wasn't even really ready for that kind of logic based character in a woman.

Sue: Yeah, and even though Spock is certainly sassy at times, unless you're really watching that character he could just come off as cold.

Jarrah: Right.

Sue: And that you know cold and logical would have been really risky for a woman to play...

Grace: It even now is.

Sue: In the late 60s. Yeah, that's true.

Grace: But it would have been such a further addition to kind of the rebellious nature of the character of Spock in having that character not only be a Vulcan who's working with humans, and kind of going outside of the Vulcan comfort zone, but to also be a woman going outside of the societal comfort zone and in a patriarchal society as we've perceived it, that would be really interesting wouldn't it.

Jarrah: Yeah absolutely. I think it definitely would have been risky, but you know it would have also been really cool. There's there's letters in *Letters to Star Trek* [edited by Susan Sackett] from like a little girl who wants to pitch herself being cast as like Spock's niece or something on a show, and we know that there were little girls at the time who looked up to Spock just like there are now, and yeah I mean just imagine what it would have meant to have a role model like that at the time.

Grace: That would have been fantastic.

Jarrah: Yeah, so, I mean one actor who actually appeared in the original series that I thought actually could have been capable of pulling this off would have been actually Diana Muldaur. When you see her in "Is There in Truth No Beauty?" [TOS SEason 3, Ep. 7], I think that she displays that same kind of reserve with emotion under the surface.

Grace: It's true you really do get a level of "still waters run deep" from her.

Jarrah: So, I could see her playing a Vulcan. That could have been cool.

Sue: But, you know I think we get a lot of Vulcan qualities from, believe it or not, *Mary Poppins*. So, Julie Andrews comes to mind for this.

Grace: Oh wow!

Sue: If you think about her conversations, I'm getting a little intense, if you think about her conversations like with Mr. Banks, she is just stone faced and, "no, I'm in charge and this is what's happening." But, she has that like a little bit of, I don't know, puckishness almost just that you get with the kids and with Bert.

Grace: And with any of her work like with Carol Burnett, she always gets to, she plays the straight man marvelously well, and to see her...

Sue: She really does.

Grace: Oh that would be so cool.

Jarrah: And now I want to read *Mary Poppins/Spock* fanfic not necessarily like sexual but buddy buddy stories.

Grace: Just them going off on adventures in space or London. Either way really.

Sue: And she's totally no nonsense, she's like, "that's not how it works."

Grace: She's very logical... in a whimsical way. Whimsy logic.

Sue: Yeah, yeah.

Jarrah: And she has that same thing too of having layers of meaning under what she's saying. Like when you see you know when she's talking about the old lady and the birds and she is telling stories to the kids very seriously, but they impart a deeper message about their parents and the situation. So, yeah I can see that, that would be awesome.

Grace: Oh man, how am I going to follow up that. Well, I had two picks for what I would like to see, who I'd like to see for woman Spock. And this one might be a little bit of a stretch because my first pick is Carolyn Jones the original Morticia Addams. Obviously, she is one of those women who's got a very ethereal sense of beauty, and is just able to kind of possess herself in an airy and unexpected kind of way that makes her just seem a little out there, which is very fun and very alien. But also, I think a big part of her comedic appeal on the Addams family is that she is able to just hold a straight face like no other, and is able to deliver just the most ridiculous and out there phrases and just keep it all internal like "oh well this is clearly happening. Why not? Why wouldn't it be happening.?" And I think that narrative will lend itself really cool both to the environment of Star Trek and also to a character of Spock who's in these situations where he sees the most outlandish things going on and is just generally the response is "well, that's interesting isn't it.?" I would really be interested to see how she would play that. I feel like it would be a really interesting crossover. To say nothing of how I'm sure there's someone out there watching TV in the 60s who thought "wouldn't that be great if the Addams Family and Star Trek just mash together somehow?"

Sue: More crossover fanatic!

Grace: You heard it here first. My second pick is Katharine Ross best known as Etta in "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" and "The Stepford Wives" and more recently "Donnie Darko" and she, I would like to see it because she is just one of those actresses who can act the hell out of any role you give her, and is also very, very good at giving a performance that's pulled very close to the chest in different contexts. But, I feel like she could definitely play that cool aloof attitude of Spock without making it seem cold and with and keeping it feeling genuine. I really think that she could do it. And also I just think she's the coolest. Yeah this is a lot of me just freaking out over which actors from the 60s and 70s I really like.

Jarrah: Well that is excellent.

Sue: Totally legit.

Jarrah: Yeah that's really cool. So anything else on Spock before we move on to our favorite irascible country surgeon?

Sue: I feel very strongly about my casting pick.

Grace: Me too. Me too.

Jarrah: All right well do you want to lead it off, Sue?

Sue: I mean do we really need to go over the McCoy characteristics? He hates everything he doesn't want to be there, but he, underneath is actually very compassionate and incredibly good at his job. But, my casting pick might be like my favorite actor of all time, and she might have been a little older than they probably would have cast, but Katharine Hepburn.

Grace: Oh yeah. Now tell us your logic here. Restate the obvious here, why would we all want to see this?

Sue: In her movies, throughout all of her movies, she defied a lot of gender stereotypes for the time. She you know insisted upon wearing pants around studio sets and it upset a lot of people. She is sarcastic as all get out, you know full of stuff and vinegar. And I think she's just the embodiment of what the McCoy character would have been as a woman.

Grace: Oh man, I can't stop thinking now though that Katharine Hepburn McCoy would have been so stylish too.

Sue: I mean you're telling me that Bones isn't stylish? Every time we see him he's wearing a different zoot suit.

Grace: I'm not saying Bones isn't stylish I'm just saying Bones in those massive shoulder pads and golf pants that'd be pretty rad.

Jarrah: I feel like at the time you would need someone who had more of that stature that Katharine Hepburn had, or alternately someone who played a bit more of a even like a stronger character piece than we saw in Bones in order to have that character be accepted as a woman, in terms of being like someone who doesn't really like anything and who was teasing Spock constantly and things like that.

Sue: Right, this is definitely another one of those characters who a lot of their characteristics are seen as negatives when applied to women characters.

Jarrah: As we saw with Pulaski.

Grace: Oh, definitely!

Sue: Yes.

Grace: But one actress who I think could have made it work really well is Barbara Stanwyck who a lot of her work was done in westerns, and because of that she had this pure cowgirl attitude in the fact that she was she was very tough, very no nonsense, of course very beautiful also, but she could throw a punch she could land a joke, I feel like she could be the simple country doctor who is stuck in space very well. And also I feel like just her manner of talking lends itself to the McCoy character very well just that kind of, "Well I guess this is happening. I'm stuck out here in space. God damn it." **said with a thick Southern accent**

laughter

Grace: That was the world's worst impression.

Sue: But you had the right country inflection for those old western movies!

Grace: And as did she that was more John Wayne than Barbara Stanwyck, but I feel like you picked up what I was putting down there.

Jarrah: Yeah. We're still working on the, "Grace does Barbara Stanwyck impression corner."

Grace: I've been told I look like her. I don't know. Another pick I have and this is kind of a stretch just because every great role I've seen her in is one where she's constantly annoyed, and that's part of where she shines. A 1960s Jessica Tandy would be interesting to see as Bones. Granted she would be... she'd probably be a lot more fussy, but at the same time that woman made a career out of being annoyed, and I feel like that's pretty close to Bones right there.

Jarrah: So, I had Angela Lansbury not only because I really wanted to put Angela Lansbury in here somewhere...

Sue: I was wondering if that was the reason.

Jarrah: Well it's definitely a big part of it, but I think that the biggest barrier when I've just been her stature as a movie actress at the time, but she clearly is able to you know portray more comedic characters as well as more serious characters, and I think that she could demonstrate a role like Bones where she's sort of a hilarious, cranky, wise, counsel friend type character.

Grace: Guys! So, I'm just imagining Bones in "Murder She Wrote" now.

Jarrah: Yeah, basically, like you know she if she can do an American accent, like a Southern American accent, even a bad one because this is 60s Star Trek, I think we could do it.

Grace: I would pay so much money to see that.

Sue: So can they redo "Wolf in the Fold" [TOS Season 2, Ep. 7] then, to be about a demon barber.

Jarrah: Yes!

Grace: Would there be... there'd be singing though, right?

Sue: There would have to be singing.

Grace: Oh dear god, yes!!

Jarrah: Actually, that was totally one episode that I was thinking of that would not work if you had a gender swap Scotty. I mean the are debatably didn't work, anyway.

Grace: This is our fantasy where the entire episode has been completely rehauled.

Jarrah: Yes, exactly.

Grace: Retooled to meet our dreams!

Jarrah: And Bones develops a desperate need to provide musical accompaniment to the story of the demon barber of the planet in "Wolf in the Fold."

Grace: Oh wow, and then there's a chorus of all the murder victims. I know my "Sweeney Todd."

Jarrah: Yeah

Grace: But does that shock anyone?

Jarrah: I think we are all "Sweeney Todd" fans here.

Sue: Look, I would watch Sondheim Trek any day of the week.

Jarrah: Yes.

Grace: Well, we do have Len Cariou, I think that's how you say his name, as Janeway's dad at one point in Voyager, so...

Jarrah: We came close! *sings with Grace* Into the wormhole, and home along the journey, to the journey, into the journey, into the journey... *Jarrah speaking again* Mashing up different Sondheim musicals, that's all you can do. Okay, are we good with Bones?

Grace: I think yeah I'm good.

Jarrah: We've got Lady Bones so... Uhura.

Grace: Now, my pick is kind of is going to be kind of an obscure one. I would have gone with Duane Jones who, performance wise, is best known for being the lead in the original "Night of the Living Dead" and he just kills it through the whole thing, he gives such a complicated performance and does it all just so perfectly erudite, and just he comes off so much as a stage actor working in the movie medium that we see a lot in a lot of the Star Trek actors in the original series, a lot of stage presence and performance going into every individual performance, and he's one of those actors where I'm just perpetually sad that as an actor we did not get to see more of him his life was pretty tragically cut short, but I feel like if anyone would have had the moxie to do male Uhura it would have been Duane Jones.

Jarrah: Cool! So, I guess before I go into casting picks, it's worth noting that this role was originally cast as a man in "Where No Man Has Gone Before," that we see Lieutenant Alden in a blue uniform, and in that episode and he was played by Lloyd Haynes and I rewatched a scene from that I guess not like exceptionally memorable but then, I mean Nichelle has incredible presence, but I don't know if the role was that incredibly memorable in the majority of episodes that she's in, certainly in where she has good scenes it's memorable. So, apparently Gene Roddenberry preferred Nichelle Nichols, so that she was written in for later episodes. But, so he's someone who would be an obvious choice for a gender swap

casting but was maybe not my top choice given that I watched it, and I said you know probably had I seen him doing more in something else I would have been maybe more impressed. So my top choice is Billy Dee Williams.

Grace: Ooooh!

Sue: Cosigned!

Grace: The voice as smooth as a Colt 45.

Jarrah: But, this was challenging as well. I actually found it most challenging to cast the women characters with male actors because, Uhura was the least challenging, but so many of the women in the original series one of their defining characteristics is to be kind of like naïve, or innocent, or kind of an ingenue who is secretly or not so secretly in love with a man on the crew. And that's not so much Uhura's case, I think Billy Dee Williams could play a similar mix of being someone who's outgoing and friendly that everyone likes to be around, but also a competent professional.

Sue: Of our women characters, I feel like Uhura has the... is the one with the fewest number of gendered characteristics.

Jarrah: Really the most gendered characteristic is, well two things I guess, the fact that some people do liken the job to a secretarial type job, which I feel like you probably wouldn't even say that if it had been a man, but also that we never get to see her command the ship, or command an away mission, and I feel like had it been a man in that position in the 60s you might have actually got to see that rather than like bringing up Scotty from engineering to do it.

Sue: Just by default the role would have been bigger.

Jarrah: Yes, at least like the responsibilities given to that role. So, my other pick for Uhura was Otis Young, who was an actor who costarred in the western "The Outcasts" which was on '68-'69 so it would have been, he would have already been on TV at the time but had he not been he could have been also in Star Trek. He, I mean I guess maybe part of the reason that it seemed like he almost would have been a natural fit for Roddenberry, given that he you know was an anti-Vietnam War activist, he was in Westerns, but he also was just you know he was shown to be able to play sensitive deep characters, and I think that's an important part of Uhura. I don't know how well he would have played the lighter side of Uhura, so, that's why Billy Dee Williams became my top pick, but I think Otis Young would have been a good second choice.

Grace: Are you saying you can see Billy Dee Williams fan dancing? Because now now I'm imagining it.

Sue: I would like to.

Jarrah: Well, I mean he was on "Dancing With the Stars" right?

Grace: Oh yeah there is that. And Lando Calrissian did feature prominently in that Star Wars dance game.

Jarrah: Amazing.

Grace: I guess slick moves are already tied to that character in my mind and therefore to him.

Jarrah: Okay, there's a Star Wars dance game?

Grace: Yeah man!

Jarrah: Why has no one made a Star Trek dance game?

Grace: Because Star Trek hasn't sold out like Star Wars, man.

Jarrah: Because all it would be as tap dancing and fan dancing?

Grace: Yes! More or less.

Sue: Is there a problem with that?

Grace: No.

Jarrah: Nope.

Grace: No problem at all ever.

Jarrah: Oh awesome. Anything else on Uhura?

Grace: Musical numbers wouldn't be you know wouldn't have to be part of the thing, but they'd be nice to keep seeing.

Jarrah: Yeah!

Sue: I mean, there were a few in the original series.

Jarrah & Grace: Yes.

Jarrah: So, we did touch on Scotty a little bit but, so I mean there's the issue with again putting a woman in charge of engineering would have been pretty significant, if you had had the that character doing everything Scotty got to do they got to be in charge of the bridge a whole bunch. So, that could have been cool. Forget "Wolf in the Fold" that would have to be totally redone. Other thoughts about Scotty?

Sue: I feel like Scotty is very often sort of our comic relief in a lot of these episodes, he's kind of a goofball and I would have this fear that writers would see the female equivalent of a quote goofball to be quote bimbo. Right? So, there's like a nervousness I have surrounding that.

Grace: I think I've got a good pick to counteract that.

Sue: Okay.

Grace: My pick was Cloris Leachman who in the 60s and 70s, and even today, let's face it she's a beautiful woman, but also just had a very take no prisoners attitude in just about every one of her performances, ironically except "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," but she has a very straight forward and in-your-face attitude that I feel like she could lend to Scotty really well, and also she's incredibly funny, so if it does come to the comic relief stuff she could totally do it. She's one of those actresses that we mainly know her for the comedic stuff, but when you look into her more dramatic stuff like so much of my of coming up with this list for me was going through actors who appeared in "The Twilight Zone" which is pretty much my, that and Star Trek, are my main basis for 1960s TV actors, and her performance in "It's a Good Life" [The Twilight Zone, Season 3, Ep. 8] is just chilling, it's terrifying, it's amazing. And, I feel like she could have brought both the seriousness when needed and could have also just been your pal down in the engine room when needed.

Jarrah: Yeah. I think with Scotty, that Scotty's comedic aspects for me are most strongly felt in the movies and in the show, there's a lot more serious moments. I don't know that I would be so much worried about the bimbo idea especially cause Scotty is rarely portrayed as interested romantically until "The Lights of Zetar" [TOS Season 3, Ep. 18]. There are, I mean, there are some like moments I guess, "Who Mourns for Adonais" [TOS Season 2, Ep. 4]. Adonis? [Trying to pronounce the name correctly] We had this question... someone wrote in and corrected us on this before so...

Grace: I've heard it in both directions.

Jarrah: I'm just going to say all of the things, and then I will have said the right one. So, there's a couple episodes where Scotty has a love interest, but it seems to be mostly very sincere and not like being kind of a ditz airhead, like I don't really see coming across as being a ditz airhead kind of type, but maybe the goo factor would have to be amplified. And so, I had a really hard time I couldn't even really pick a good person for this. I feel like while I would love to put Carol Burnett in here, and Carol Burnett certainly does have some serious acting chops, like she is much better at bringing the funny, almost maybe I think too goofy for Scotty.

Sue: I think if you want to emphasize the goofiness but not quite go Carol Burnett, you could go Mary Tyler Moore.

Grace: Yeah!! Oh my gosh can we get her and Cloris Leachman on the Enterprise? That would be so cool!

Jarrah: Yeah I mean and then you also have to think about that they'd be putting on a Scottish accent. And so I was trying to envision if you asked Shirley MacLaine to put on a Scottish accent. I couldn't really see it, but sure, I mean this is all imaginary anyway.

Grace: Again this is dream casting. We get to do what we want.

Jarrah: Sure. All right, well Sulu is an interesting character and another one that I found difficult to cast although more so because especially at that time there were so few Asian women actresses in Hollywood, even fewer actually Japanese, actresses of Japanese descent. So, it's a bit of a challenge. That was some of the Roddenberry attempted diverse casting, and but maybe before we get into actors how do you think that this character would have changed or not?

Sue: You know in all honesty the roles of Sulu and Chekov are so small already, that they probably wouldn't have changed that much.

Jarrah: Yeah, I mean, I think that George Takei injected a lot of personality into Sulu, and some of the storylines that they wrote that are his most memorable scenes, like the you know running down the hallway half naked oiled up with a...

Sue: Right, with a fencing foil.

Jarrah: A fencing sword, were like influenced by him so it's hard to say but I certainly don't see them letting a woman do that on 1960s TV.

Grace: If only Cinemax have been around back then right? Hey-o, that was my terrible cable joke.

Jarrah: Yeah, so I mean I wasn't able to find a Japanese-American actress that I knew well enough to be able to say if they would be good at this role. A couple names of actors of Asian descent that came to mind one was France Nuyen, who played Elaan of Troyius [TOS Season 3, Ep. 2]. Who is actually a very talented actress and deserved better role than that.

Sue: Absolutely.

Jarrah: And I mean that's the other thing is they also may have changed that character's name had the actor or actress not been of Japanese descent. My understanding was that the actor had some influence on the character identity. So, France Nuyen is Vietnamese, the other actress who came to mind was Nancy Kwan who was in "The World of Suzie Wong" with William Shatner, and Nancy Kwan was known for being playful, and I think that that would be a... that was an important part of one of the only memorable parts of Sulu in those short scenes he had in the original series. I think the challenge would be when you throw in the gender and also the racial dynamics that there tends to be a stereotype about Asian women being demure. So, it would have been particularly challenging to see an Asian woman on the Enterprise being as gung ho and outgoing as Sulu was.

Grace: Right.

Sue: Especially running down the hall with the fencing foil.

Jarrah: Yes.

Grace: I'm afraid I was really at a loss with this one. I hate to say it but the majority of Asian actors that I know of from the 60s are martial arts performers and not all of them next to none of them were in American TV. So, I'm really reaching with my pick because I know her again as a samurai movie performer but always one that gives an incredible performance, and I would have liked to see how she would have done as Sulu. Again I'm stretching it so much here so I apologize but I'm going to say Meiko Kaji who is best known as Lady Snowblood, because for one thing she could have totally done the sword fighting bit, that was her entire schtick for a long time in the 60s, and also just a very charming actress who's really able to turn up to 11 and when needed, so afraid that's what I've got.

Sue: Lady Snowblood...

Grace: Yeah, it's good stuff.

Sue: That's legit.

Grace: It's the Japanese series that "Kill Bill" is pretty much based off of and she does some great bits in it where she has to be undercover and turn totally sweet like, "Oops, I'm just an average girl, aren't I cute and fun?" And part of me is like, "Yeah, I could I could see that channeled into Sulu a little bit."

Jarrah: There is Yeoman Tamura in the original series played by Miko Mayama, the challenge is that this is in the episode "A Taste of Armageddon" [TOS Season 1, Ep. 23], at that point we don't even learn her first name. She seems probably okay from what we see on stage, but it's again just hard to gauge her full range of acting ability based on this small appearance in the original series. Let's "Chekov" the next one.

****laughter****

Sue: I think you've got maybe possibly the same, I don't know, concern as you do with Scotty because again Chekov is one of the more comedic characters.

Jarrah: Yeah I think though, with Scotty that, oh sorry, Chekov, some of the key differences are fake Russian accent versus fake Scottish accent, okay maybe not a key difference, but that Chekov is supposed to be very young and Scotty is one of the older characters on the ship. So, in some ways Scotty may actually be more resistant to those negative stereotypes around dumb women. Chekov isn't dumb, neither is Scotty, but like you said about this idea that if women are funny or goofy then you can't really take them seriously professionally. But, I thought that a decent choice for Chekov would be Dawn Wells who played Mary Ann in Gilligan's Island, because I think that she filled a similar role in terms of you know being sort of popular and of the times, but could also pull off that kind of silliness about the character and possibly even a bad Russian accent.

Grace: Now my pick because she's already she came to mind because she's already kind of in the sci-fi genre, Anne Frances because she is young, eternally young looking with those little round cheeks and everything, but also she just has a very plucky attitude in a lot of her performances that I kind of associate with Chekov, just being the kid there who's just like, "oh well golly this is what we're doing now" and I feel like she could do that very well. And I feel like that's what we kind of got to see her do in portions of "Forbidden Planet." Just be kind of like "oh well this is happening. How exciting."

Jarrah: Yeah, I feel like they would have to be very earnest and fresh faced kind of.

Grace: I feel like she could do Ernest very well.

Jarrah: Yeah. All right. Shall we keep motoring along?

Grace: Let's do it.

Jarrah: Okay, Rand.

Sue: These are the really hard ones.

Jarrah: Yeah well we don't have to do them all but I thought we should try and make an attempt at Rand and Nurse Chapel or at least talk about why we can't fill them. I found both of these very challenging because...

Sue: These are the most gendered.

Jarrah: Yeah absolutely. Yeah they're both, they're tied to their affection for one of the male crewmembers. Rand, well, they both get to display competency, but they're both in more feminine traditionally feminine professions in terms of you know what Rand is actually doing, being like serving Kirk his coffee and bringing him clipboards, and Chapel you know being a doctor who gave up doctoring to be a nurse. So...

Sue: I feel like Rand would have to be super young, like right out of the Academy it's his first assignment. You know he's like the gopher.

Grace: I'm gonna be a contrarian here and give you guys my pick for Rand. Now hold onto your domes here because I might blow 'em. William Shatner.

Jarrah: Amazing!!

Grace: Yeah, just think about it a little bit. William Shatner is your gal Friday in space. Think about it. Not only would the irony be delicious, but I feel like he's got the level of just kind of "I'm here. You can talk to me" that he can put into his role that we got as part of the concept initially with Rand. I think that would be an entertaining take.

Jarrah: Okay, I can't totally see it but mind blown.

Grace: Just let that marinate on your brain a little bit.

Jarrah: I think that this is actually a bit of a reverse, too because in this case, both Rand and Chapel, their characteristics I think would be seen as demeaning for a man to have, and this is like it is because they're seen as so feminine, so it would be seen as beneath a man to have those characteristics, to be like pining after their senior officer, to be, actually yeah, in both cases, pining and self-sacrificing in order to take care of others not necessarily with a lot of thanks. So, it's interesting, it is just like another way that sexism manifests by putting these constraints on men, and because of the way that femininity is devalued. But I think my pick for Rand was Bruce Hyde who played Lieutenant Riley on the original series.

Grace: Oh I could see that.

Jarrah: Yeah, so, I think he could do young, impressionable, silly. I'm not sure I can see him pining for the captain, but that is maybe something that maybe shouldn't have been there quite as much in the first place anyway.

Sue: I think that's a really good pick.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Thanks!

Grace: That was inspired.

Jarrah: What about Chapel?

Sue: Only because I've wanted to say this name the entire time, Alan Alda.

Grace: Yes!!

Sue: But, not really. But, can you imagine Bones and Hawkeye working together? Saggiest sickbay in all the galaxy.

Grace: Could he keep the big blond hair? Oh my gosh.

Jarrah: Oh my gosh, that would be so amazing. The only person I came up with for Chapel was young Ian McKellen, I mean all of these people are young at this point. And then I was like trying to question, you know is it, then yeah, and then I was like oh okay, am I only able to think of someone who is gay because that he's played more effeminate characters in the past? But, like he's obviously played a vast range of characters, but I just think legitimately he has some of the best range of any actor who was working at that time.

Grace: Fair enough.

Jarrah: But, probably that role is kind of beneath him as it was also beneath Majel Barrett, which actually that's an interesting point is that none of us picked Majel Barrett for any of these roles.

Grace: Oh you're right.

Jarrah: I did think of her a little bit as possibly Spock, but also think she probably could have pulled off Scotty because she could do funny as well. We just didn't get to see that in her original series roles. But if you combine Lwaxana in Nurse Chapel and Number One into one mash up with a Scottish accent you've got Scotty, right? Maybe...

Sue: Although sticking with you know my MASH idea...

Grace: Your MASH-up?

Sue: Yes, a little more seriously for Chapel possibly Mike Farrell who is the actor who played B.J. Hunnicutt.

Grace: Yeah.

Sue: So a little bit of a softer character than...

Jarrah: Or, what about Gary Burghoff who played Radar, because he wasn't actually that young even though he was playing like a teenager.

Grace: He's wasn't that young just very very adorable.

Sue: Radar's the best!

Jarrah: I know! Everyone would have been like, "he's the cutest nurse around".

Grace: You just want to pick him up and put him in your pocket.

Jarrah: Yeah I know but that would also be a bit unfortunate because that you know having a male nurse who isn't taken seriously, also contributes to gender stereotypes in some way. So that's why like Rand and Chapel were so darn hard to cast. Okay, so, the only other character I put on this list is someone to suggest whether it would be even possible to cast as a different gender was Harry Mudd, everyone's favorite character.

Sue: No, I have the answer. The answer is Majel Barrett as Lwaxana Troi.

****Laughter****

Jarrah: As young Lwaxana Troi.

Sue: No, like TNG era. Literally Lwaxana Troi.

Grace: I have to rip up my idea and throw it in the river because I don't think I'm going to top that, at all.

Jarrah: Yeah, I mean, I think so Harry Mudd has been described as a space pimp, you can go back and listen to our Harry Mudd episode if you want more discussion on how accurate that is and various problematic elements.

Grace: Join us in an hour of cringing.

Jarrah: Yeah, but you know he really goes back to the Western influence, and I think that if they were going to be putting a woman in this role they'd be looking for like sort of a madam like a saloon owner manager type woman.

Sue: Absolutely.

Jarrah: So, yeah I mean I think that she could definitely do it. My choice was Lucille Ball. So, yeah it would have been interesting. It probably would have been...

Sue: Gilda Radner!

Grace: Oooh yeah. Again though, with her would it have been adorable though.

Sue: Yeah that's true.

Jarrah: Yeah I think Majel's the most character of being capable of being brassy.

Grace: Well, my choice was Joan Blondell because I think as an actress she just oozes brass, and I feel like she's someone who you could definitely buy her being the sort of person who will buddy up to you at the bar, buy you a drink, chat you up give you, you know make sure you're all having a great time, and then just run off with all of your money laughing the whole way to the bank.

Jarrah: Nice.

Grace: I feel like if she could do it fantastically.

Jarrah: Awesome. All right. Well we are getting towards the hour mark. Do we have any final thoughts on this exercise?

Grace: I really wish I had more of a wide variety of Asian and Asian-American TV actors to work from, from this. But, again my media knowledge of that time period in where Asian and Asian-American performers is involved is so limited.

Jarrah: I think that I would love to hear other suggestions. Tried to do some research on it, there just wasn't a heck of a lot out there, and this was the time when when African-American actors were starting to make some real inroads particularly men. So, it wasn't as hard to try and find people who might have been good at Uhura, but Asian women were still extremely under-represented and even today it's hard to come up with like a huge list compared to white actors certainly. So, yes so I mean if other people are more familiar with the actors of the time then let us know.

Sue: This is definitely the hardest of the series for this exercise not only because we're working with a timeframe that we're not super familiar with in terms of the actors, but that it's a time frame or there are lots of constraints on gender roles on television. So, there's a lot of question about what those characters would actually be had they been a different gender.

Jarrah: I mean every time, I'm just going to go with Maggie Smith as Captain Kirk, got her shirt ripped she'd have to have at least a bra and a belly button cover on.

Grace: Because that feels real natural. The belly button cover.

Jarrah: But it's interesting, I mean I think you know like I said the reason we do this is just to sort of challenge this idea that you know a certain role necessarily has to be cast to be a certain gender and to challenge creators and critics to just say what were the full range of possibilities here. Like it is okay to write a character to a particular gender, but when you are getting stuck in that because of stereotypes or just not even thinking about it really beforehand then that can be a problem. Awesome. Well thanks so much for joining us here, tonight... today. And Sue where can people find you elsewhere on the Internet?

Sue: You can follow me on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/spaltor>

Jarrah: And Grace where can people find you?

Grace: You can find me on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/BonecrusherJenk> and by all means if you can think of a better Sulu suggestion I would love to hear them.

Jarra: Absolutely. You can email us as a show at crew@womenatwarp.com or you can comment on our Facebook or on Twitter at <https://www.facebook.com/womenatwarp/> or <https://twitter.com/WomenAtWarp> or on our Web site <http://www.womenatwarp.com/> I'm Jarrah, and you can find me on Tumblr at <http://trekkiefeminist.tumblr.com/> or on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/jarrahpenguin> Thanks so much for listening!

****OUTRO MUSIC****